

Outdoor Play and Learning Special Interest Group

European Early Childhood Education Research Association (EECERA)

Report 2017-2018

SIG Convenors

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1. Aim of the SIG:

The SIG Outdoor Play and Learning is an emerging field of interest in international research and practice in early childhood education. Whilst in some countries, especially in Scandinavia, outdoor environments have long been established as crucial sites for learning, in others such as within the UK, the need to provide children with regular outdoor experience has only recently been given more emphasis in policy and practice. This change is due in part to concerns about the restriction of opportunities for outdoor play over the last three generations due to rise in traffic, greater institutionalisation of childhood and parents' safety concerns. At the same time, access to the outdoors for children has become limited with far greater use now of adult controlled and structured space. However, a clear pedagogy for the use of the outdoors as a site for learning has not been established and there has been relatively little research on what actually happens in outdoor environments.

The Outdoor Play and Learning SIG at EECERA is well placed to coordinate and disseminate international research on the international discourse in this emerging field. It aims to:

- create a space for shared thinking about play and learning in outdoor spaces;
- develop synergies between participants from a wide range of professional and scientific contexts;
- provide an academic and rigorous forum at European and international level to develop and disseminate high quality research on outdoor play and learning.

2. Activities 2017-2018:

The SAGE Handbook of Outdoor Play and Learning – with 40 chapters – published at SAGE in 2017: <https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/the-sage-handbook-of-outdoor-play-and-learning/book245741#description> was launched at the EECERA conference 2017 in Bologna, Italy.

Publications (a selection from the convenors):

Ärlemalm-Hagsér, E., & Elliott, S. (2018). Transcultural explorations in nature based early childhood education: Sweden and Australia. In P. Becker., C. Loynes., B. Humberstone & J.

Schirp (Red.), *The Changing World of the Outdoors - European Reflexions*. (pp. 89-103). London: Routledge.

Ärlemalm-Hagsér, E., & Pramling Samuelsson, I. (2018). Early Childhood Education and Care for Sustainability – historical context and current challenges. In V. Huggins & D. Evans (Red.) *Early Childhood Care and Education for Sustainability* (pp. 13-28). London: Routledge.

Ärlemalm-Hagsér, E., & Sandberg, A. (2017). Education for sustainability in the Swedish pre-school: the relationship between humans and nature and young children's participation and agency. In T Waller., E. Ärlemalm-Hagsér., EB Hansen Sandseter., L. Lee-Hammond., K. Lekies., & S. Wyver (Red.), *The SAGE Handbook of Outdoor Play and Learning* (pp. 213-228). London: Sage.

Waller, T., **Ärlemalm-Hagsér, E.**, **Hansen Sandseter, EB.**, Lee-Hammond, L., Lekies, K., & Wyver, S. (2017). Introduction. In T Waller., E. Ärlemalm-Hagsér., EB Hansen Sandseter., L. Lee-Hammond., K. Lekies., & S. Wyver (Red.), *The SAGE Handbook of Outdoor Play and Learning* (pp.1-21). London: Sage.

Bateman, A. & **Waters J.** (2018) Risk-Taking in the New Zealand Bush: Issues of Resilience and Wellbeing. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Research in Early Childhood Education*; Special issue. 12 (2) 7-29. <http://www.pecerajournal.com/?page=3&vol=12&no=2>

Bilton, H. and **Waters, J.** (2017) Why take young children outside? A critical consideration of the professed aims for outdoor learning in the early years by teachers from England and Wales. *Social Sciences: special issue: Equality and Social Inclusion: The Role of Education 6 (1) 1*; doi:[10.3390/socsci6010001](https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci6010001)

Waters, J. (2017) 'Affordance Theory', in *The SAGE Handbook of Outdoor Play and Learning*, eds Tim Waller, Eva Ärlemalm-Hagsér, Ellen Beate Hansen Sandseter, Libby Lee-Hammond, Kristi Lekies and Shirley Wyver. London: SAGE.

Waters, J., Payler, J. and Jones, K. (2018) *The Professional Development of Early Years Educators* [Eds] Routledge: Abingdon

Sando, O. J., **Sandseter, E. B. H.**, Pareliussen, I., & Egset, C. K. (2017). Injuries in Norwegian early childhood and care (ECEC) institutions. *Nordic Early Childhood Education Research*, 14, 1-15.

Kleppe, R., Melhuish, E., & **Sandseter, E. B. H.** (2017). Identifying and characterizing risky play in the age one-to-three years. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 25(3), 370-385. doi:10.1080/1350293X.2017.1308163

Storli, R. & **Sandseter, E. B. H.** (2017). Gender matters: Male and female ECEC practitioners' perceptions and practices regarding children's rough-and-tumble play (R&T). *European Early Childhood Research Journal*, 25(6), 838-853. doi: 10.1080/1350293X.2017.1380881

Sandseter, E. B. H., Ball, D. J., Brussoni, M., Little, H., & Eager, D. (2017). Risk and safety in outdoor play. In T. Waller, E. Ärlemalm-Hagsér, E. B. H. Sandseter, L. Lee-Hammond, K. Lekies & S. Wyver, (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Outdoor Play and Learning* (pp.113-126), SAGE Publications.

Storli, R. & **Sandseter, E. B. S.** (2017). Preschool teachers' perceptions of children's rough-and-tumble play (R&T) in indoor and outdoor environments. In J. Murray (Ed.), *Early Childhood Pedagogies: Creating Spaces for Young Children to Flourish*, Routledge.

Sandseter, E. B. H. & Lyklett, O.B. (2017). Outdoor education in the Nordic region. In B. Van Oers, M. Fleeer, S. Broström, J. Einarsdottir, & I. P. Samuelsson (Eds.) *International Handbook on early childhood education and care* (pp. 889-906), Vol. 1. Springer.

Kennair, L. E. O., **Sandseter, E. B. H.**, & Ball, D. (2018). Risky play: healthy or dangerous? In A. B. Kaufman & J. Kaufman (Eds.), *Pseudoscience: The Conspiracy Against Science* (pp. 171-194). MIT Press.

Symposiums

At the EECERA conference in Budapest, Hungary 4 self-organised symposia from the Outdoor play and Learning SIG, including 11 presentations are going to take place.

The SIG meeting

The SIG meeting for 2018 is going to take place on Tuesday 28th of August between 15.30-17.00 at Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Budapest

3. Future activities:

Publications, meetings, networking, cross-national collaboration, symposiums

Special issue in the International Journal of Play

The SIG is organizing a special issue of Outdoor play & learning in the International Journal of Play to be published during 2019. The SIG started to prepare for the work on the issue during the SIG meeting in Bologna 2017.

Membership of the SIG

This year the Outdoor Play and Learning Special Interest Group's total number of paying members is 12 and 104 associated members (2018-06-06)

4. Networks established with other institutions and organisations:

Each member of the SIG has a network within their own country and area of work. The collaboration within the SIG between members mean that the SIG is informally associated with a wide variety of local, regional, national and international networks and organisations.

5. How do the SIG's activities fit with aims and ethos of EECERA:

The activities in the SIG encourage and support cross-national collaborations, with multi-disciplinary research on early childhood and early childhood education. The collaboration between the researchers in the SIG group also study outdoor education and play and its applications to policy and practice.

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